Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

37.   (Currently amended) A method performed by a computer system, the method comprising:

receiving, by a network interface or an input device of the computer system, a search query comprising a plurality of search terms from a user, where the search query further includes a plurality of user-selected operators associated with one of the search terms of the search query and where the plurality of operators comprise a same operator repeated multiple times;

broadening, by a processor of the computer system, the one of the search terms based on the plurality of user-selected operators to produce a broadened search query, where broadening the one of the one of the search terms comprises:

broadening the one of the search terms to an extent determined by a number of times the same operator is repeated; and

executing, by the processor, a search using the broadened search query.

38.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, where the search query further includes a user-selected delimiter associated with another one of the search terms that indicates that the other one of the search terms should not be broadened.

39.   (Currently amended) A method performed by a computer system, the method comprising:

receiving, by a network interface or an input device of the computer system, a search query comprising a plurality of search terms;

broadening, by a processor of the computer system, one of the plurality of search terms;

excluding, by the processor, the broadened one of the plurality of search terms from the search query;

executing, by the processor, a search based on the search query, after excluding the broadened one of the plurality of search terms, to provide search results; and

evaluating, by the processor, the search results relative to the excluded search term using categorical or clustered distinctions.

40.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, where broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

determining a meaning associated with the one of the search terms.

41.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, where broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

determining a related concept based on the meaning.

42.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, where broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

modifying, replacing, supplementing, removing or restating the one of the search

terms.

43.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, where broadening the one of the

search terms comprises:

selecting a broadening search term associated with the one of the search terms

from a set of words having a synonymous, alternate spelling, common root, or similar

semantic meaning.

44.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, where broadening the one of the

search terms comprises:

presenting at least one broadened search term associated with the one of the

search terms as at least one of a static list, a menu of selectable search terms, a set of

checkboxes or a list of selectable search terms; and

receiving, from the user, a selection from the presented at least broadened search

term.

45.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 37, where broadening the one of the

search terms comprises:

presenting at least one broadened search characteristic associated with the one of

the search terms as a hyperlink; and

forming the broadened search query responsive to a selection of the hyperlink by

the user.

46-48.   (Canceled)

49.   (Previously presented) A computer-readable medium containing instructions

executable by at least one processor, the computer-readable medium comprising:

     one or more instructions for receiving a search query comprising a plurality of

search terms from a user, where the search query includes multiple symbols which define

a user-assigned strength of broadening associated with one of the search terms of the

search query;

     one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms to an extent

determined by the user-assigned strength to produce a broadened search query, where a

number of the multiple symbols determines the extent to which the one of the search

terms is broadened; and

     one or more instructions for executing a search based on the broadened search

query.

50.   (Canceled)

51.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where the

search query further includes a user-selected delimiter associated with another one of the

search terms that indicates that the other one of the search terms should not be broadened.

52.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where the

one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

one or more instructions for determining a meaning associated with the one of the

search terms.

53.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 52, where the

one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

one or more instructions for determining a related concept based on the meaning.

54.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where the

one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

one or more instructions for modifying, replacing, supplementing, removing or

restating the one of the search terms.

55.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where the

one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

one or more instructions for selecting a broadening search term associated with

the one of the search terms from a set of words having a synonymous, alternate spelling,

common root, or similar semantic meaning.

56.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where the

one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

one or more instructions for presenting at least one broadened search term

associated with the one of the search terms as at least one of a static list, a menu of

selectable search terms, a set of checkboxes or a list of selectable search terms; and

one or more instructions for receiving, from the user, a selection from the

presented at least broadened search term.

57.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where the

one or more instructions for broadening the one of the search terms comprises:

one or more instructions for presenting at least one broadened search

characteristic associated with the one of the search terms as a hyperlink; and

one or more instructions for forming the broadened search query responsive to a

selection of the hyperlink by the user.

58-62. (Canceled)

63.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, where each

of the multiple symbols comprises one of a graphical or character symbol.

64.   (Previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 51, where the

user-selected delimiter comprises a symbol that is different than the multiple symbols.

65.   (Previously presented) A system implemented within a computer device,

comprising:

means for receiving a search query comprising a plurality of search terms from a user, where the search query further includes multiple user-selected operators associated with one of the search terms of the search query and where the multiple user-selected operators comprise multiple symbols that represent search term broadening;

means for broadening the one of the search terms based on the multiple user-selected operators to produce a broadened search query, where the means for broadening the one of the search terms based on the multiple user-selected operators to produce a broadened search query comprises:

means for broadening the one of the search terms to an extent determined by a number of occurrences of the multiple symbols; and

means for executing a search using the broadened search query.

66.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the multiple symbols comprise one of a graphical or character symbol.

67.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the search query further includes a user-selected delimiter associated with another of the search terms that indicates that the other of the search terms should not be broadened.

68.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 67, where the user-selected delimiter comprises a symbol that is different than the multiple symbols.

69.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the means for broadening the one of the search terms includes:

means for determining a meaning associated with the one of the search terms.

70.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 69, where the means for broadening the one of the search terms includes:

means for determining a related concept based on the meaning.

71.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the means for broadening the one of the search terms includes:

means for modifying, replacing, supplementing, removing or restating the one of the search terms.

72.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the means for broadening the one of the search terms includes:

means for selecting a broadening search term associated with the one of the search terms from a set of words having a synonymous, alternate spelling, common root, or similar semantic meaning.

73.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the means for broadening the one of the search terms includes:

means for presenting at least one broadened search term associated with the one

of the search terms as at least one of a static list, a menu of selectable search terms, a set

of checkboxes or a list of selectable search terms; and

means for receiving a selection from the presented at least broadened search term

from the user.

74.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 65, where the means for broadening

the one of the search terms includes:

means for presenting at least one broadened search characteristic associated with

the one of the search terms as a hyperlink; and

means for forming the broadened search query responsive to a selection of the

hyperlink by the user.

75-76. (Canceled)

77.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 39, where broadening the one of the

plurality of search terms comprises:

determining a meaning associated with the one of the plurality of search terms

and determining a related concept based on the meaning.

78.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 39, where broadening the one of the

plurality of search terms comprises:

modifying, replacing, supplementing, removing or restating the one of the

plurality of search terms.

79. (Previously presented) The method of claim 39, where broadening the one of the

plurality of search terms comprises:

selecting a broadening search term associated with the one of the plurality of

search terms from a set of words having a synonymous, alternate spelling, common root,

or similar semantic meaning.

80. (Currently amended) A method performed by a computer system, the method

comprising:

receiving, by a network interface or an input device of the computer system, a

search query comprising a search term;

obtaining, by a processor of the computer system, a set of broadened search terms

based on the search term;

presenting, by the network interface or by an output device of the computer

system, the set of broadened search terms as a set of corresponding hyperlinks in a user

interface;

receiving by the network interface or the input device, selection of a subset of

hyperlinks of the set of hyperlinks to select a subset of the broadened search terms;

broadening, by the processor, the search query using the selected subset of

broadened search terms; and

executing, by the processor, a search using the broadened search query.

81.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 80, where obtaining the set of broadened search terms comprises:

determining at least one meaning associated with the search term.

82.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 81, where obtaining the set of broadened search terms comprises:

determining one or more related concepts based on the at least one meaning.

83.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 80, where obtaining the set of broadened search terms comprises:

modifying, supplementing, or restating the search term.

84.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 80, where obtaining the set of broadened search terms comprises:

selecting a broadened search term of the set of broadened search terms that is associated with the search term from a set of words having a synonymous, alternate spelling, common root, or similar semantic meaning.

85.   (Currently amended) A method performed by a computer system, the method comprising:

receiving, by a network interface or by an input device of the computer system, a search query comprising a search term;

obtaining, by a processor of the computer system, a set of broadened search terms

based on the search term;

presenting, by the network interface or an output device of the computer system, a

set of checkboxes in conjunction with the set of broadened search terms, where each

checkbox of the set of checkboxes corresponds to one broadened search term of the set of

broadened search terms;

receiving, by the network interface or the input device, a selection of a subset of

the set of checkboxes to select a subset of the broadened search terms;

broadening, by the processor, the search query using the selected subset of

broadened search terms; and

executing, by the processor, a search using the broadened search query.

86.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 85, where obtaining the set of

broadened search terms comprises:

determining at least one meaning associated with the search term.

87.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 86, where obtaining the set of

broadened search terms comprises:

determining one or more related concepts based on the at least one meaning.

88.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 85, where obtaining the set of

broadened search terms comprises:

modifying, supplementing, or restating the search term.

89.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 85, where obtaining the set of

broadened search terms comprises:

selecting a broadened search term of the set of broadened search terms that is

associated with the search term from a set of words having a synonymous, alternate

spelling, common root, or similar semantic meaning.